

YAZOO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

PUBLIC USE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

August 1985

Submitted By: Arnell Williams  
Refuge Manager

Date 8/26/85

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_  
District Supervisor

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Branch of Public Use

Date \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC USE REQUIREMENTS  
INFORMAL REVIEW FORM

Instructions: Fill in blanks and attach to Public Use Development Plan

District/Zone 4

Station Name YAZOO NWR

Station  
Number 43680

Requirements	Requirement Compliance? ( Yes, No, N/A)	\$ Cost Estimate to Meet Requirement (only if "No" compliance)
1. Set station public use goals	<u>YES</u>	\$ <u>          </u>
2. Project a positive attitude	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>350.00</u>
3. Welcome and orient visitors	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>10,900.00</u>
4. Develop key resources awareness and other interpretation	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>17,050.00</u>
5. Provide observation opportunities and additional forms of non- consumptive recreation	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>22,000.00</u>
6. Provide teacher assistance	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>--</u>
7. Maintain quality hunting program	<u>YES</u>	\$ <u>          </u>
8. Maintain quality fishing program	<u>N/A</u>	\$ <u>          </u>
9. Manage cultural resources	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>7,000.00</u>
10. Explore public assistance opportunities for field station operations	<u>NO</u>	\$ <u>---</u>

\* Compliance must be filled in on all Public Use Requirements as one of the following:

Yes - Requirement category has been met.

No - Requirement category has not been met.

N/A - Requirement category is not applicable to this station.

\$ Funds estimated as necessary to meet the category requirement.  
(Listed for "No" only)

PUBLIC USE DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
FOR YAZOO  
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

CHAPTER 1. PUBLIC USE GOALS

National Public Use Requirement #1: SET STATION PUBLIC USE GOALS

The goals for each public use function at Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge have been developed in concert with the National Public Use Goals (see Appendix 2) and are as follows:

A. Interpretation

- To provide activities that enhance public understanding and appreciation of key resource issues and management activities on Yazoo NWR.

B. Outdoor Classrooms

- To encourage use of Yazoo's resources for ecological/environmental study by school and university classes.

C. Educational Assistance

- To work with teachers and other professionals involved in educational activities in their efforts to use Yazoo NWR for environmental and conservation education.

D. Program Information

- To provide the public information about Yazoo's programs, facilities, regulations, and priorities regarding fish and wildlife.

E. Fish and Wildlife/Wildlands-Oriented Recreation

- To allow consumptive and non-consumptive forms of wildlife/wildlands-oriented recreation consistent with Yazoo NWR's fish and wildlife management practices and objectives.

F. Non-Fish and Wildlife-Oriented Recreation

- To discourage all non-wildlife oriented recreation.

G. Dedicated Areas/Cultural Resources

- To maintain and protect all cultural resources on Yazoo NWR and prevent any further deterioration.

## CHAPTER 2. PUBLIC RELATIONS

### National Public Use Requirement #2: PROJECT A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

#### Present Conditions

- A. Every visitor entering the refuge office is greeted in a courteous way by a properly uniformed employee.
- B. Questions by visitors are handled promptly by person, or over the phone, or by mail.
- C. News releases concerning hunts on Yazoo NWR are timely and informative.
- D. Several refuge staff members are involved with local groups outside of work that relate to refuge interests.

#### Improvements Needed

- A. Set a goal of one news release per month to cover all aspects of resource management and recreational opportunities at Yazoo.
- B. Revise general leaflet to specify what, where, when, and how visitors can visit Yazoo NWR. (FY 86 \$350)
- C. Replace any current signs with "negative" messages with signs bearing a more positive tone.

### CHAPTER 3. VISITOR WELCOME AND ORIENTATION

#### National Public Use Requirement #3: WELCOME AND ORIENT VISITORS

##### Present Conditions

- A. The visitor may stop in at the refuge headquarters on County Rd. 97, off Mississippi Hwy. 1 to ask questions and pick up literature.
- B. Available leaflets at the headquarters and at the new kiosk on County Rd. 97 include: general leaflet, refuge bird list, and hunt brochure.
- C. Large entrance signs off Hwy. 1 onto C.R. 97 guide visitor into refuge.
- D. All graded roads with the refuge are signed by name and directions to lakes and ponds posted for visitors.
- E. The refuge office hours are posted at the entrance to the refuge headquarters off C.R. 97.

##### Improvements Needed

- A. Directional signs needed to guide visitors to the refuge from a distance of 30 miles out on Miss. Hwy. 1, U.S. 61, and other major roads. Make sure visitors leaving Greenville know where they are going. (\$2,500.00 cost estimate).
- B. Revise all leaflets to provide visitor with current information and develop a "Calendar of Wildlife Events" leaflet. (\$700.00 cost estimate).
- C. Prepare a canned slide program of about 10-15 minutes, to be updated regularly, for speaking engagements.

- D. Already plan to order kiosk and leaflet dispenser for northern entrance (County Rd. 38) near Indian Mounds. Targeted for FY 87 \$7,000 cost estimate.
- E. Suggest "You are Here" sign for all entrances unless already in kiosk display (\$200.00 each).
- F. Supply accurate current information about Yazoo NWR to nearby sister agencies, land managers, chamber of commerce, museums, etc., for distribution to the public. For example: Leroy Percy State Park, Delta National Forest, Winterville Mounds State Park, Greenville Chamber of Commerce.
- G. Nice to have current state road maps and info. about National Parks, National Forests, State Parks, etc., in the area for visitors.
- H. Consider permitted/prohibited sign for entrance from Miss. 1 onto C.R. 97 (\$500.00).

## CHAPTER 4. INTERPRETATION

### National Public Use Requirement #4: DEVELOP KEY RESOURCES AWARENESS

The following are 5 of the most important resource related topics as determined through refuge objectives:

1. Water Level Management - water level manipulation, vegetation control, moist soil management.
2. Bottomland Hardwoods - ox-bow concept, Natural Research Areas, Swan Lake.
3. Woodduck Production
4. Heron/Egret Rookery
5. Farming for Waterfowl

### Present Conditions

- A. New kiosk on C.R. 97 discusses water level management, bottomland hardwoods and farming for waterfowl.
- B. The general leaflet discusses topics # 2 and 5.
- C. Woodduck box construction leaflet in refuge headquarters for visitors.

### Improvements Needed

- A. Revise general leaflet to include all the above topics. (\$350.00)
- B. Topic #4 will be included in the Alligator Pond trail that is in the planning stage. Panel or leaflet will be used. (\$300.00)



- C. Planned trail around Lizard Lake, Dead Man's Ditch will have signs or leaflet to interpret items 1,2,and 5. (\$500.00)
- D. Wildlife Drive will be open seasonally for visitors to view topics 1,2,3, and 5 at work on Yazoo NWR.
- E. Prepare slide program that highlights the five main resource topics.
- F. Planned for exhibits in visitor contact room to be renovated: topics to be covered include 1,2, and 5 (\$10,000, FY 87).
- G. Planned canoe trail with signs to interpret topic 2. (Signs - \$500; leaflet-\$400; boat launch - \$5,000. All planned for FY 87).

Additional Topics that Address Key Resources Awareness and Other Secondary Interpretive Themes:

In addition to meeting the national requirement in this area we feel it is necessary to expand our interpretive effort to the public and help plan for future development by including the following topics and themes:

1. Timber Regeneration
2. Cultural Resources and their management/protection
3. Recreational Opportunities at Yazoo
4. Migration
5. Resident and Endangered Wildlife

#### Present Conditions

- A. Topics 2,3 general mentioned in refuge leaflet.
- B. Topic 2 interpreted in exhibit in refuge headquarters.

C. Hunting opportunities detailed in hunt leaflet.

D. Public use opportunities mentioned in kiosk panel.

Improvements Needed

A. Plans are to interpret Indian mounds on County Rd. 38 with a kiosk panel or leaflet (FY 87, \$7,000 for trail and entire kiosk).

B. Add public use opportunities section to revised general leaflet and other kiosks ordered. Costs already estimated.

C. Develop slide program on additional resource topics, where feasible.

## CHAPTER 5. NON-CONSUMPTIVE RECREATION

### National Public Use Requirement #5: PROVIDE OBSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

#### Present Conditions

- A. All dike roads are open to foot travel to view waterfowl except during deer hunts and waterfowl banding operations.
- B. All dike roads and the trails around Lizard Lake and Alligator Pond allow for non-vehicular traffic to view resident wildlife.
- C. Visitors obtain information on wildlife sightings at refuge headquarters.

#### Improvements Needed and Future Planning

- A. Leaflets and signs will be ordered for Alligator Pond, Lizard Lake, and Dead Man's Ditch trails (FY 86 \$2,000; to grade, gravel and complete wildlife drive around Lizard Lake and Dead Man's Ditch, \$5,000 FY86).
- B. Observation Towers for Alligator Pond (FY 85 or 86 \$5,000); Lizard Lake (FY 87 \$5,000); Deer Lake (FY 86 \$5,000).
- C. Proposed trail around Big Lake.
- D. Proposed driving road to connect Headquarters with Alligator Pond Trail.
- E. Develop leaflet "Calendar of Wildlife Events" (already estimated with other leaflet revisions).
- F. Attempt to avoid conflicts between wildlife observation and management and other public use activities.

G. Revised leaflet will contain more wildlife observation information.

Other Areas Nearby that Provide Non-Consumptive as well as Non-Wildlife-Oriented Recreation:

A. Leroy Percy State Park - 2,200 acres, located just north of the refuge boundary on State Rd. 12. Provides trails, picnic areas, interpretive center, swimming and camping.

B. Winterville Mounds State Park - 40-acre park located five miles north of Greenville, MS on Miss. Hwy. 1 (roughly 35 miles from Yazoo NWR). Picnic facilities, museum interpreting local Indian "mound builders" and trails up existing mounds.

C. Delta National Forest - located about 10 miles south of Yazoo NWR on Miss. Hwy. 1. Facilities: picnic areas, boating, and fishing.

Information about the above might be included in general leaflet revisions to assist visitors.

## CHAPTER 6. TEACHER ASSISTANCE

### National Public Use Requirement #6: PROVIDE TEACHER ASSISTANCE

#### Present Conditions

No current program. No eating areas, restroom facilities, or potable water available for groups visiting the refuge.

#### Improvements Needed

- A. At least a one time physical contact by a refuge staff member with local school member with local school boards and PTO's.
- B. Have available short orientation slide program and one-page hand-out for educators on refuge resources.

## CHAPTER 7. CONSUMPTIVE RECREATION - HUNTING

### National Public Use Requirement #7: MAINTAIN QUALITY HUNTING PROGRAMS

#### Present Conditions

- A. Hunt leaflet provides map, permit information, regulations, and standard dates.
- B. Refuge conducts an archery, muzzleloader, youth gun and general gun hunt for deer; plus, small game hunts for squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, and opossum. In addition, the refuge holds a spring turkey hunt and mourning dove hunt.

#### Improvements Needed

- A. Streamline signing during hunts indicating closed areas by reflecting some of this information in the hunt leaflet and map.
- B. Minimize conflicts between hunters and other visitors as well as wildlife management operations.

## CHAPTER 8. CONSUMPTIVE RECREATION - FISHING

### National Public Use Requirement #8: Maintain Quality Fishing Program

#### Present Conditions

- A. Yazoo NWR is closed to all fishing activity due to high pesticide levels including Chlordane, Dieldrin, PCB, DDT, DDE and Toxaphene.
- B. Current activity includes close monitoring of pesticide levels to determine trends.

#### Improvements Needed

None at this time.

## CHAPTER 9. DEDICATED AREAS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### National Public Use Requirement #9: MANAGE CULTURAL RESOURCES

#### Present Conditions

- A. Yazoo NWR's archeological survey prepared in 1978 pinpoints four possible sites of historical importance.
- B. One intact mound site (Swan Mounds) is proposed for interpretive signing. It is also listed on the National Register for Historic Sites.
- C. The other sites are mowed annually and there are plans to cover with fescue or to reforest.
- D. Exhibit on the Mound Builders in visitor room at headquarters.

#### Improvements Needed

- A. As mentioned above, plans exist to mark and interpret at least one intact mound. Law enforcement considerations are that uninformed visitors will be digging in the mounds for artifacts.
- B. Mention Indian occupation in general leaflet, as suggested in Chapter 4.



## CHAPTER 10. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

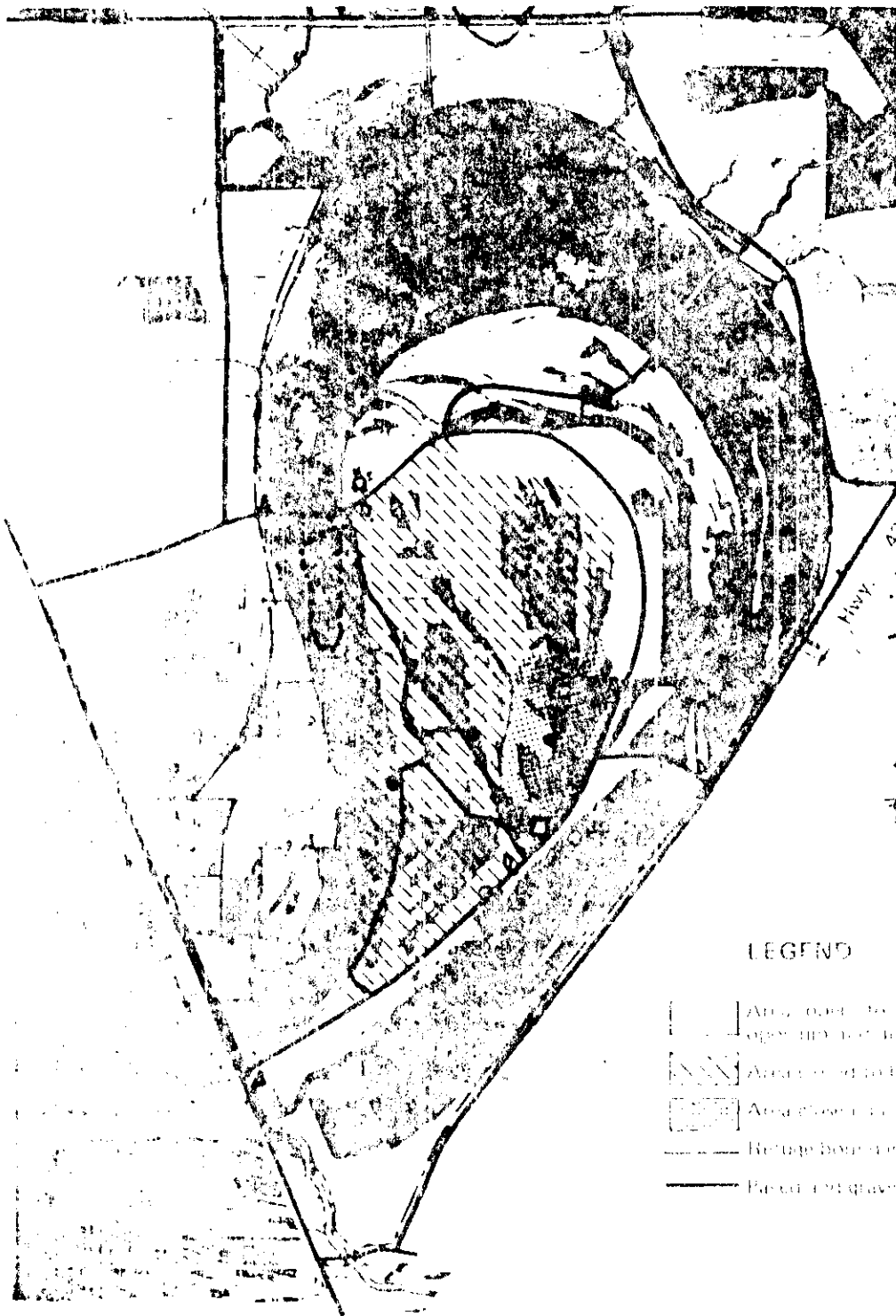
### National Public Use Requirement #10: EXPLORE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIELD STATION OPERATIONS

#### Present Conditions

- A. Several volunteers assist with waterfowl banding.

#### Improvements Needed

- A. Appoint one staff member as volunteer coordinator.
- B. Develop a list of feasible projects for volunteers as well as a strategy for recruitment.
- C. Recruit volunteers to assist in interpretation, outdoor classroom projects and wildlife management.



- CANOE TRAIL (PROPOSE)
- ..... NATURE TRAIL
- DRIVING TRAIL
- OBSERVATION TOWER
- ⬠ KIOSK
- △ ENTRANCE SIGN
- ⊙ INDIAN MOUNDS

#### LEGEND

- [ ] Area open to public for open hunting and fishing
- [X] Area closed to hunting and fishing
- [ ] Area closed to hunting and fishing
- Refuge boundary
- Federal gravel roads

# YAZOO National Wildlife Refuge

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
16-426-03-10-1000